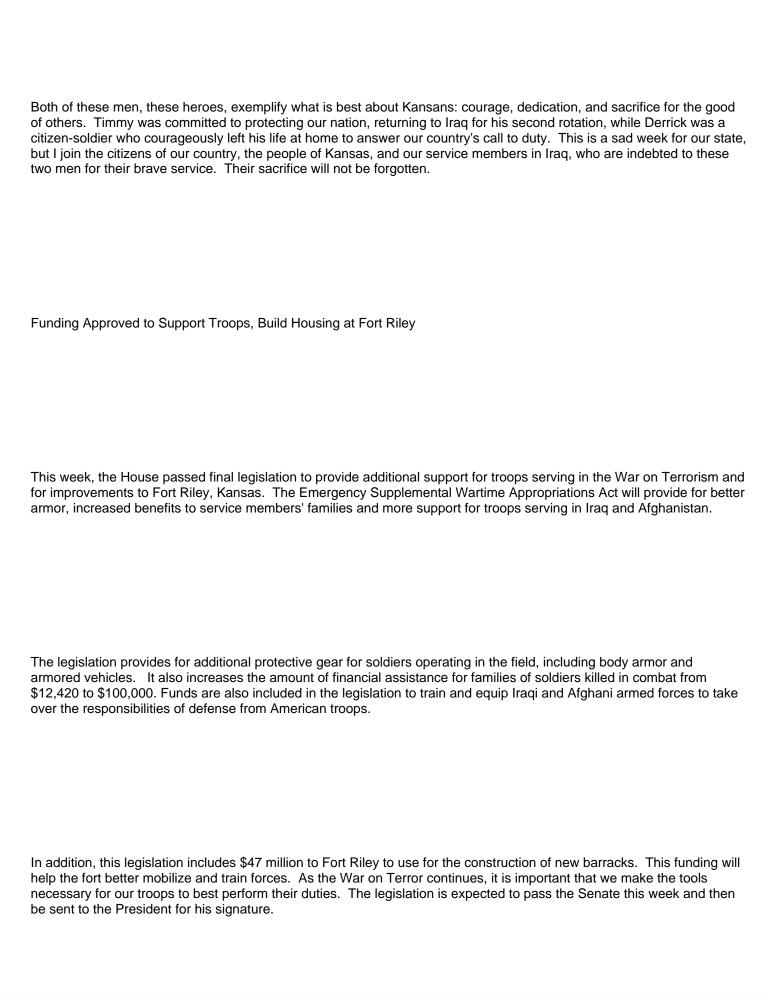
5/09/2005 This Week in Congress This Week in Congress May 9, 2005 Dear Friend, Welcome to "This Week in Congress." I hope you find it useful.

Honoring the Lives of Two Kansans Killed in Operation Iraqi Freedom

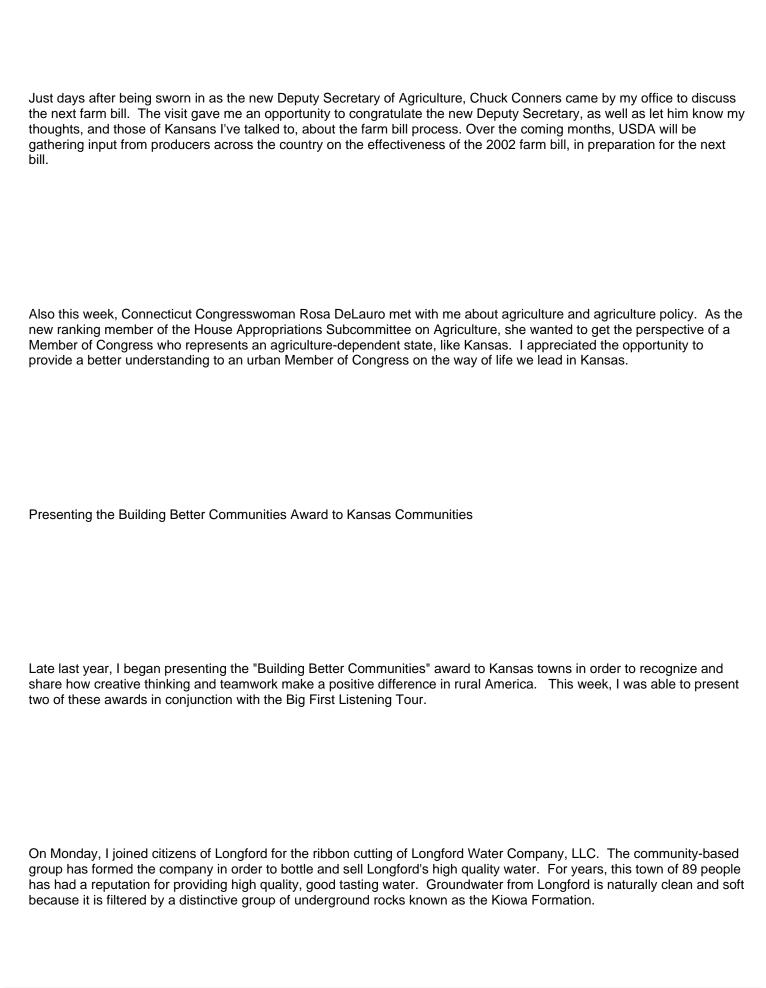
On Monday, I had the honor of joining members of the U.S. Army during services at Fort Riley to remember the life of Army First Sergeant Timmy J. Millsap, of Salina. Sergeant Millsap was killed on April 25 in Taji, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. Also this week, it was learned that Kansas Army National Guard Specialist Derrick Lutters, 24, of Goodland, was killed on May 1 in Baghdad, when the vehicle he was riding in was attacked by a suicide bomber.

Millsap is the forty-ninth Fort Riley soldier who has died while serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Lutters is the third Kansas Guard soldier who has been killed in the war.



House Passes Improvements to Technical Education
This week, I supported House passage of H.R. 366, the Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act. This legislation reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, which provides for career and technical education programs at secondary and post-secondary schools.
I am a strong supporter of the Perkins program. In Kansas, vocational, career and technical education helps our state develop a well-educated and productive workforce that can compete successfully in today's market. The Senate passed legislation to reauthorize Perkins in March, so Congress will now work to resolve the differences between the Senate and House versions.
I have heard from many career and technical education professionals in Kansas and understand their perspectives for reauthorization of the Perkins Act. As the House and Senate work to finalize this legislation, I will remember the importance of these programs to our state.
Hearing Held to Review Federal Crop Insurance

Wednesday I chaired a hearing of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management to review the Federal Crop Insurance System. The hearing, which featured testimony from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials as well as crop insurance agents from across the country, allowed the subcommittee to evaluate the delivery and effectiveness of crop insurance for farmers.
The federal crop insurance program provides a safety net for producers to protect themselves from devastating crop losses due to weather, pests or disease. This week's hearing focused on crop insurance as it relates to soybean rust and Premium Reduction Plans.
The hearing came a week after officials in Georgia discovered the first outbreak of soybean rust in the U.S. this year. While we have not yet had any reports of rust in Kansas, producers and the crop insurance industry need to be prepared for that possibility. The hearing also focused on Premium Reduction Plans, which allow insurance providers who can show savings in the delivery of the crop insurance program, without adversely affecting service to farmers, to pass that savings on to farmers in the form of reduced premiums.
This hearing was a useful update on the status of the crop insurance program. My subcommittee will continue gathering feedback from producers, the Administration and the industry regarding crop insurance to ensure that the system better meets the needs of crop producers.
Washington, D.C. Meetings on Agriculture



On Friday, Kensington-area residents were recognized for the opening of their new grocery store. When the community's only grocery store closed a year and a half ago, townspeople joined together to form The Kensington Community Store, Inc., to oversee the construction and development of a non-profit community grocery store with a noon deli. Since that time, the group has raised more than \$130,000 to support the project.
In order for rural communities to survive and prosper in the future, citizens must be willing to create their own opportunities for success. The Longford Water Company and the Kensington Community Store are just two examples of how hard work, innovation, professional management and community pride can create such an opportunity.
Big First Tour Continues
Both of these "Building Better Communities" award presentations were held in conjunction with stops along the Big First Listening Tour. Other stops this week, in addition to Longford, in Clay County, and Kensington, in Smith County, were Council Grove, in Morris County; Belleville, in Republic County; Mankato, in Jewell County; and Phillipsburg, in Phillips County.
The tour continues over the coming months. For a full list of the times and dates of when I'll be in your county, visit my website here: http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/ks01_moran/041105TheTour.html

In the Office

Several large groups of Kansans were in the office this week, including trustees and managers of various Kansas electrical cooperatives, doctors and hospital administrators representing the Kansas Hospital Association and pharmacists representing the Kansas Association of Community Pharmacists. Also in this week was Trace Walker from Blue Beacon International in Salina. Mr. Walker was representing the National America's Travel Plazas and Truck Stops and was in to talk about highway funding. Also in from Salina this week was Elaine Edwards, with the National Association for the Education of Young Children. She discussed child education issues such as Head Start.
Librarians from across the state were in to discuss issues important to the Kansas Library Association. Those in my office included Dennis Wilson of Dodge City, Pat Gaunce of Kansas City, Patti Butcher, Tim Rogers and Rosanne Siemens, all of Topeka, and Michelle Swain of Arkansas City. In to discuss education issues with the National Education Association were Tom Brungardt of Pratt and Pam Taverner of Wichita. Also this week, representatives from the rural telecommunications industry were in to talk about current telecom issues facing Congress. Their group included Larry Sevier with Rural Telephone in Lenora, Dick Veach and Catherine Moyer of Pioneer Telephone in Ulysses, Archie Macias of Wheat State Telephone in Udall, Gordon Mikesell of Southern Kansas Telephone in Clearwater, and Mark Gailey and Bill McBride with Totah Communications in Oklahoma.
Very truly yours,
Jerry